Health Services Research and Development Service
Multiple Principal Investigator Eligibility Policy
Implemented February 2008
Updated March 2009

Purpose

- The purpose of this Health Services Research and Development Service (HSR&D) policy is to accommodate the recognition of two or more Principal Investigators (PIs) on research projects. This policy defines the eligibility criteria designed to appropriately designate multiple individuals as PIs who share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing specific project activities, intellectually and logistically. Accepted PIs would be responsible and accountable to HSR&D and VHA for the proper conduct of approved projects including the submission of all required reports. The approval of more than one identified PI on a project application does not diminish the accountability of any individual PI to HSR&D and VA. The PI must demonstrate the appropriate level of authority and responsibility to direct the project supported by research funding to be considered a Principal Investigator. The following policy details describe criteria and procedures to apply for multiple principal investigator (MPI) status on a single research effort.

Policy

- Criteria for identifying more than one investigator as PI on a single research application include: the contribution of critically important, well defined, non-overlapping intellectual skills; distinct project responsibilities and substantial percent effort; study complexity; potential study impact; and size of study budget.
- The Director, HSR&D (in collaboration with the Director of another ORD Service, if the project involves more than one Service) will approve / disapprove the application for multiple PI's, with the advice of the study's peer review committee. The request for multiple PI status will be considered during the peer review process for the project itself and administratively by ORD staff and the Director(s). This will only be addressed for those applications that attain a fundable review score.
- Each request will be reviewed and may not be approved as one project but separated into multiple applications with single PIs if deemed appropriate by the review panel and/or Director(s) (i.e., for financial, portfolio or other administrative reasons). Regardless of a multiple or individual PI approval, related projects will be tracked and administratively managed by the Scientific Program Managers (SPM).

General Administrative Issues

- The MPI program began January 1, 2008, and applies only to newly submitted, merit reviewed Investigator Initiated Research (IIR), Service Directed Research (SDR) and QUERI Service Directed Projects (SDP) at single or multi-site locations.
- The MPIs must meet VA eligibility criteria before funding is initiated according to requirements for MPIs found in VHA Handbook 1200.15, HSR&D Handbook 1204.1 and merit proposal application instructions at: http://www.research.va.gov/resources/policies/by_number.cfm and http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/funding/default.cfm (*see How to Apply*)
- Projects not submitted through NIH eRA grants.gov should included VA Forms 10-1313-1-4 as follows:
  - Form 10-1313-1: Up to 3 PIs may be named on form 10-1313-1. One PI, designated the "Corresponding PI", will have primary responsibility for communicating with HSR&D staff on project related administrative and research issues.

- Form 10-1313-2: The HSR&D Abstract format must be completed according
- Form 10-1313-3: The role of each proposed PI and expected funding support for each site must be detailed on the budget page.
- Form 10-1313-4: The rationale and justification for multiple PIs must be articulated on this form and clearly supported by the research project's narrative.
- Projects that are submitted through NIH eRA grants.gov should be prepared according to the instructions at http://vaww.research.va.gov/funding/docs/VA-SF424_RR_Guide_02_05_09-locked.doc
- An IPA or consultant may not be a PI.
- Projects and products (publications and presentations) for MPI projects may be reported in the ART program in each PI's Center annual report.
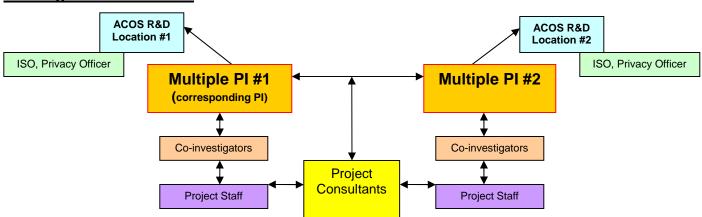
Center of Excellence, and REAP Specific Administrative Issues

- Multiple PIs may be considered "core" investigators at their location in Center annual reports in the ART program if all other criteria for that designation are met.
- Multiple PIs may be considered unique funded PIs in the annual report matrix summary account at their individual Center location.
- Multiple PI publications and presentations related to these projects may be considered in the annual report matrix summary account at their individual Center location if the PI is the first author.

*Sample tools to determine the distinct leadership roles of MPIs:

MPI Table

MPI Name/Degree	Location-Station #	Distinguishing Responsibility	Overlapping or Shared Roles	Other Comments
MPI #1				
MPI #2				
MPI #3				

MPI Organizational Chart